

A
Protestant Antidote
Against
POPERY:

With ^{V. 00.}
^{67.}
A Brief DISCOURSE of the
great Atheisticalness and vain
AMOURS now in Fashion.

Written in a LETTER
to a Young Lady.

By a Person of Honour.

D U B L I N ,
Printed; And are to be sold by
Joseph Wilde, Bookseller in
Castle-street. 1673.





M A D A M,

I Know the Law of Custom has made it not onely an usual favour, but an expected Duty, to complement at least, if not flatter, such women as men write to, especially the Great Ladies, who think none write well, that do not praise them much, and those write best, who extol them most :

A 3 High

High praises being like good Poetry, Musick in words, the sound of which may be agreeable, but truly to deserve them, requires such a Gygantick size of merit, as is very unproportionable to the slender-wasted Virtues of most Ladies, who are over-eager to receive praises, and over-careless in meriting any, and the grand reason is, because they know they usually have them without it, and that custom must give it, though reason cannot, so obliging is the common courtesie of *England* to Ladies, that it allows them to pretend to all praises as their due, though few deserve
any

any as their right. In a word, our *English* Ladies must have their Characters writ, just as the *Dutch* Madams will have their Pictures drawn, that is very handsom, though they themselves be never so ugly.

But, *Madam*, for your part, I know your perfections so abundantly, and my own heart so truly, as I must beg the Law of Custom pardon here, it being beyond my power to flatter, or complement, since I can neither overpraise your high merit, or out-speak the real love, and true esteem, I have both for you and them, so that knowing all manner of praises to be justly due to your me.

rits, I find I cannot here make you a present of any, without doing you an injurie, by intituling you to those praises by gift, which all know are your own by right.

For truly, *Madam*, the whole progress of your Actions have still been so highly vertuous, and religiously strict, and ever believed, and proclaimed such, that though your Beautie might make bad men wish you ill, yet your Vertues hinder the worst from daring to think you so; for if they did, their own hearts must at the same time condemn their own thoughts, and declare your innocencie; like *Pilate*, who with the same
breath

breath he condemned our Saviour, said, *He found no fault in him.*

But, *Madam*, though your vertuous life is so transparently excellent, yet for all that, you ought to look on your unsoil'd reputation as no small blessing of preservation in these scandalous times, where so few Handsom Ladies escape censure, and so many deserve it; for now the extravagancies of Romance-Amours are not onely daily read, but almost hourly practis'd; and women act, more than Romances can write, whilst the sober rules of Vertue, and pious duties of Religion, are seldom thought on, and most

rarely practised, our Youth being generally grown, such fond friends of Mr. *Hobbs* his Books, as they are become meer strangers to our Saviour's Gospel, they living as if they were all bodies, and had no souls, or had them but to lose, turning Religion into Raillerie, and Gospel into Romance; for thus in short they mangle Scripture, that part which is chiefly Historical, that is their meer Gospel-part; and that which is the Gospel-part, is their meer Historical-part; and because they cannot bring the Gospel to prove their Atheistical reasons, pretend to prove by reason, that there is no Gospel; and

and if some of them now and then look over a Chapter, they onely pass through it, as a Spie doth an Enemies Countrie, with a mischievous design; and if they can but find in Scripture a seeming contradiction, that they presently bring on the Stage, as they do Fools in Plays, to raillie with, and make sport at; so great a Jeast our Young Sparks now make of their salvation, as to be pleas'd in the meer displeasing God, without considering 'tis not onely Atheistical madness, but Devilish follie, to make that their Jest which they may be damn'd for in Earnest.

Thus our Youth throw a-
way

way their souls, and for their time they care not how they spend it , (alwaies provided it be not religiously) and therefore they wast it most in the companie of vain women, and are so eager and zealous in their pursuit , and so constant in their service, as if they fancied God was mistaken , and intended creating man for the woman , rather than the woman for the man ; but though all know God made the woman for the man: Yet what Critick can tell us whether our new-mode has made the Gallant for the Mistress, or the Mistress for the Gallant ; but of this we are all sure, they are so plentifully

ly made for one another, that the *Eastern* Country Laws allow not with more freedom pluralitie of Wives, than our new-*English* Customs admit pluralitie of Mistresses; Nay, I may yet venture to say more, That the Libertie of our men exceeds theirs; for they are permitted no more Wives, than they can well keep, but ours are allowed as many Mistresses as they can any way get.

For indeed the Names of *Tom* and *Bess* are hardly more familiar here, than those of Gallant and Mistress, and are so far from being esteemed Names of discredit, that many of our Mode Ladies look on
their

their Gallants as Beauty-marks, rather than stains of Reputation, and for all they cannot but know, that the infection of Gallants is as bad an enemy to credit, as the small Pox to Beautie, a common ruiner of it; And though womens Gallants are in plain *English* no better than the publick Executioners of their reputations, and indeed no women will allow them, but such as are willingly condemn'd to suffer (and women that slight reputation are seldom fond of Chastitie) Yet these abusers of love, & murderers of fame, by their fair words and base Arts have so insinuated themselves into their fa-

your

vours, as the women now forthwith, call their Gallants their Friends, and if common report may be credited, they are indeed their bosom-ones; (and such women as value little what others say, seldom care much what they themselves do) Custome having brought many of our women to that pass, as they now glory in the number of their Gallants, esteeming them rather so many Vouchers of their Beautie, than so many robbers of their Honour, the so usual practice of this scandal, having taken away womens sense, that like blackness amongst the *Æthiopians*, its commonness has removed

B

its

its deformitie : And there is now such a forward Love-spring in the Nurseries of our Young Ladies, as the very little ones learn to spell Amour with their Fescue , and will pretend to entertain their Young Gallants, in the dark walks of Love, and in the Labyrinth of its Intrigues , before they well know what the thing Love is, or the name of Gallant means , and would have Servants come to them , before they come to the Teens, (the ripeness of their minds outrunning that of their bodies) and fancy men so mad as to believe, 'tis expectation makes a Blessing dear ; but that dull Presbyterian way
of

of Love , is now quite out of Fashion, & the loves of our Young Gallants are grown as fickle and meer skin deep , as their Mistresses Fancies and Beauties; and Love-wounds that are but skin deep , can never hurt the heart ; and therefore though every day we hear of Hundreds of Gallants that are dying for love in their Mistresses companie , yet we cannot read of one these many Ages that dyed for Love in the Weekly Bills of Mortalitie , the obliging carriage of the Ladies of the times having made our Young men so healthfully wise , so forwardly bold, or at least so impatiently hastie, as they ex-

pect now a dayes to take
 Young women, as great Ar-
 mies do weak Towns, onely
 by Summons, or Assaults, as
 not esteeming them worthy
 the time and trouble of a
 Love-siege, though their Mi-
 stresses were as yielding as
Rome it self, which Writers
 say, was never besieged with-
 out being taken: that is in
 short, they hold Handsome
 women worth enjoying, but
 not wooing. And that makes
 our Young men so eager and
 inconstant in their Amours,
 as really 'tis a very hard mea-
 suring-cast to tell, whether
 our Young Gallants use now
 more art, or speed, in the get-
 ting or forgetting of their
 Mistresses. But

But the best of it is , that the inconstancie of both Sexes are now so equally match'd , that I cannot write more of their Gallants inconstancies , than their Mistresses make good of their own ; for they deal with their Gallants , as their Fashions , that which comes latest is still like'd best , and us'd most. In a word , the constancie and inconstancie of our Young men and women , are just like water , and ice , where one still makes the other , and their loves (ice-like) never last long , and as soon as 'tis dissolv'd , turns immediately to the same it was before , without any alteration or prejudice: Nor can wa-

ter be more apt and readie by the coming of Frost to turn to ice , than our Young men and womens hearts are apt & enclin'd to return to love, at the approach of fresh-fancied Beauty. And truly the inconstancie of our Young men cannot be so great , nor their inclinations so ill , but the tongues of many of our Young women are grown as bad; for now if a Young maid be but cry'd up for handsom, and resolves to continue virtuous, and therefore will not turn vain, and deserve censure, as much as the rest, they will be sure to speak her as bad as the worst, and if they cannot with Justice wound her

her vertue, they will attempt by ill Arts to murder her reputation, (envie being the parent of wicked invention) it being now a Mode-principle amongst most of our handfom women, that no woman that enjoyes a large proportion of Beautie, but must as an unavoidable appurtenance, carry with it a load of scandalous censures (a false Character of some, though too true a one of most) which occasions their not caring how unjustly they increase anothers burthen, in hope to lessen their own load, and by overstretching the miscarriages of others greater than they should be, hope to shrink theirs less than

really they are, vainly fancy-
 ing that by spattering with
 dirt and reproach other wo-
 mens reputations, were a
 kind of wiping clean their
 own, which suits not at all
 with the mild and moderate
 rules of Vertue, which onely
 allows women to correct each
 others faults, by their good
 Examples, but not to increase
 them by their bad censures:
 For, scandalous censures
 like Mushrooms, grow without
 any root, so tender, and
 mutable a thing, is a hand-
 som womans good Name:
 there's no taking its true Ele-
 vation by any certain out-
 ward Rules and measures,
 Since it depends more on her
 Neigh-

Neighbours good or bad report, than on her own virtuous, or ill actions; & more on what they say, than what she does; & really such reports are usually so sophisticated with self-concerns, and so strongly byass'd by aversion or inclination, as you may daily hear in common Discourse, both men and women turn vertue into vice, and vice into vertue; and so characterize Good women to be bad, and bad women to be good, speaking not as women deserve, but as they fancy; and therefore it often happens, that many women save their reputations even by a speedy losing their chastity, whilst other women lose their
 repu-

reputation in their very defence of it, that is in short, more women lose their reputation in admitting to be much courted (though that be all) than by being ill enjoy'd, and the reason is plain, because the courtship is publick to all, but the enjoyment is onely private to themselves, and 'tis more rational Two concerned persons should keep their own counsel, than many unconcern'd should keep it for them; so that it cannot necessarily follow, that the reported reputation or disreputation of handsom' women must needs be the true issue of their merits, but often the by-blow of chance, and therefore

fore common report can be no right rule to measure womens reputations by , for many reports have much of the Devils nature in them , who is a liar from the beginning. And indeed if we but truly consider, we shall find women generally censure one another, not as they are really faultie, but as they appear, and are esteemed handsome; and therefore ugly women have the priviledge of Popes , who cannot err , but may do what they will , and take what libertie they please ; and handsom women will be as far from censuring their actions , as young men from praising their persons , so that really in effect , we
find

find most womens censures are not proportionable to the ill, others act, but rather suitable to the beautie they possess, which by their leave is a way of judging, that's both irrational and uncharitable; since I am sure none can deny, but that there are some unhandfom women, unchast; and some chast women handsome, for vertue and beautie are not so declar'd enemies, but they sometimes meet; though I cannot deny, but that vertue which in former Ages was esteemed one of the greatest adornments of the soul, is now so Eclipsed by the outward beautie of the bodie, as vertue and piety
(the

the true inward beautie) cannot shine out: a good soul being nothing now in comparison of a good face, beautie being now the Great Empress that commands the whole World, and makes very Kings to un-King themselves and become subjects to her. And yet this so ador'd beautie, (which all women are so ambitious of, and all men so court) has at best no intrinsic value in it, but just like riches, they enjoy most, that are contented with least; since 'tis not much, but enough, that's the true measure of satisfaction. But *Madam*, 'tis now more than time to beg your pardon, for I find I am stray'd

C both

both beyond the time, and beside the road of my design'd Discourse, which is not to present you a Character, or List of the fine Ladies, and mode-vices of the times, they will require a much wittier Pen than I pretend to be Master of, and a larger Volume than I design to trouble you with: but this Character which indeed merits volumes of praises, I am sure I can give you without needing wit, or abusing of time; and if I could here cast up the summe total of all the vices that your Sex are either guilty of, or scandaliz'd with, (which I'll assure you are more than a few) their number

ber might be tedious to read, but need not be disagreeable for you to hear, since by naming all those faults, they are infected with, I should but tell all those you are free from.

But, *Madam*, my design is now to remove my Batterie, and change my Scene of Writing, as you have your place of Living, and to level my Discourse, not at the vices and pleasures of *London*, nor the pastimes of the Court, but at your Country Neighbours, the Woods and Mountains of *Macroome*, which renders it a place much fitter to exercise your patience, than satisfy your delight,

were you of the humour of most Ladies ; but all know you are not onely an Excellent woman , but an Extraordinary Wife , I mean in Goodness , (for 'tis rare now to meet a Wife that's not extraordinary) for you take as much satisfaction in the cares of well managing and improving your Estate , as most other Ladies delight , in the lavishing theirs ; so that I can truly say , you have not onely brought your Lord a large summe of money for your Portion , but a continued increase of Rent by your Industrie.

And I am sure, *Madam* , if you were now ask't as the
Ph:

Philosopher was, Where was his home ; you would answer now, as he did then, My home is still where my chief business is : so that now your chief concerns and Family, (which is still the good Wives Treasure) being at *Macroome*, I must conclude your heart is there also.

A place where in lieu of *London*, crowds of good Company, & swarms of diversifements ; you must prepare to meet with, and do penance to your self, among the Flocks of Priests and Fryers, against whose Popish insinuations, and infectious perswasions, I here present you a small, but necessary Collection of Ar-

guments to carry about you, as a preservative in your own Religion , and an Antidote against theirs ; and though I cannot pretend this pocket Pistol is a sufficient Battering piece , to beat down their infallible Church , yet I doubt not but it will at least be a sufficient Life-guard to defend you and your Chamber against their assaults.

They are most of them argumentative reasonings I pickt out of Mr. *Chillingworth* , as one that reasons best , and satisfies me most , of any I ever read ; and knowing you want a Collection of choice flowers , I heartily wish that these I have gathered

ed

ed out of his Garden , and here sorted and made up to present you in a Nosegay , may serve you against the unpleasing favour of Popish Doctrine , and I wish they may not altogether degenerate from the common nature of flowers , which the Naturalist tells us , grow larger and better by being transplanted : so that I hope you will not find them the worse , nor like them the less , for being transplanted , but receive these Arguments just as you do your Rents , without caring whether your Tenants have the Money out of their own bags , or borrow it ; so you have it to supply

C 4 your

your occasions.

Truly , *Madam* , I have taken some pains , and spent much time in reading the Discourses of the Papists against our Religion , and though I have consider'd their Arguments without the least Byas, or antedated prejudice; yet I can give no better a Character of them , than I do of ill Dealers , the more I have to do with them, the worse I like them: they savour much of self-interest , teaching Church Government, before Gospel Obedience, witness their holding Marriage a greater crime in a Priest than Fornication, the one is but forbid by their Churches Law ,

Law, which they all know is disputable, the later by the Law of Christ, which they cannot but know, ought to be past all dispute.

And truly, *Madam*, if you please to admit your reason to make but a short progress into the Popish Religion, you shall find much to create your wonder, but little to satisfy your reason or belief; for the Gospel of Christ is the Gospel of Truth, and therefore ought still to be pictur'd naked as Truth, without any Art of *Roman* Dresses, which are onely obscure shadings of the true light of Scripture, by making dark Paraphrases on the plainest

nest Gospel Commands, which
 in all reason ought to be plain
 enough for the meanest capa-
 city; for God forbid it should
 be otherwise, for the mean-
 est Christian must be saved or
 damned, for keeping or not
 keeping them; and sure God's
 Justice will never send per-
 sons to Hell, for not doing
 what they could not under-
 stand was his Will, they should
 do; that were such a cruelty,
 as if a man should torment
 his servant for not doing his
 Errant, when he knew he
 did not understand his Mes-
 sage; yet the Papist must
 not take these plain Gospel
 Commands as such, but as
 they are distill'd in the myste-
 rious

rious politick Lymbeck of the Popish interest : indeed Mystery and Obedience is so interwoven in that Religion, that Papists must take what their Priest tells them, as men do wives , for better , for worse , and must marry their Faith to their Churches infallibility , which allows that onely to be Gospel which their Church sayes shall be , not what the Apostles write is so ; for the Papists must obey the Pope , though no where commanded in the Gospel ; but must not read the Gospel , though they are commanded there to do it.

Nay, when once the Papist can but touch the small
Needle

Needle of any ones reason with the Great Loadstone of the Harmonious Doctrine of a necessary Obedience to their infallible Church, then they make such follow it, to every point of the Compass, be it good, bad, or indifferent; and so they sail all their life, in a Trade-wind of ignorance and superstition, and must believe their Priests words before their own senses in the plainest objects of them; as in the Miracle of Transubstantiation, where you must have eyes and see not, hands and feel not, but must believe in a moment real Bread and Wine to be turned into perfect Flesh and Blood, though

though you cannot see the least change whatsoever, yet they are bound to belive their Priest, before their eyes, smell, or taste, nor dare their Priest say, that the consecrated Bread (which they esteem the real Body of Christ) will be less mouldie, or more uncertain of corruption after Consecration than before; and the yeast of it is, that at the same time the Papists believe that Miracle, they also believe this Scripture, *That God will not suffer his Holy One to see corruption.* And though for these and many other reasons, I cannot believe this Transubstantiation-Miracle, yet I cannot but ad-
D mire

mire this Miracle that belongs to Transubstantiation, which is, how the Pope can bring so many, that have sense and reason, to believe it.

But I shall pass by their adoring this Sacrament, their praying to Saints, and a multitude of their superstitious observances never used in the primitive Church; and shall only desire you, *Madam*, to observe in general, that the Papists follow the Gospel, just as they read *Hebrew*, that's backward; for God plainly commands, that all should search the Scripture. And our Blessed Saviour ordered the Sacrament to be administred in both kinds,

I Cor.

1 *Cor.* 11. *Chap.* 28. v. And *St. Paul* forbids publick prayers in an unknown Language, but that which is most for Edification, 1 *Cor.* 14 c. 15, 16. v. But these plain positive commands do not hinder the Church of *Rome* from declaring, that unlearned men shall not read and search the Scriptures; but if we believe *St. Paul* before the Pope, we may read in the 17. of the *Acts*, 11. v. how he commended the Noble *Bereans* for searching the Scriptures, and therefore if searching the Scriptures had not been not onely lawful, but a commendable act, certainly *St. Paul* would never have commended

ed them for so doing. So that the Popish Clergy forbids the reading the Scriptures, under a pretence that their Laity might not truly understand them. Next, the Church of *Rome* allows onely their Clergy (except free Princes, for they are excepters of persons, though God is not) to receive the Communion but in one kind, though our Saviour commands, that all drink of the Cup; and the Papists cannot deny, but that the Communion was taken in both kinds in all Christian Churches for above a Thousand years after Christ.

And Lastly, for the poor vulgar sort, they shall onely hear

hear their publick prayers in an unknown Tongue, *viz.* *Latine*, which a Tenth part of them do not understand; and therefore how that can be most for Edification, let the Papists tell if they can, I am sure we cannot, nor do we believe they can, without the help of another Transubstantiation-Miracle, and make an unknown Language to most, to be chang'd at the same time into a common known Language to all.

And now, *Madam*, I shall humbly desire you to consider in general, that though the Papists do out-noise us: (as shallow rivers do still the deepest) with the high

and mighty Rodomontades of
 their Churches infallibilitie ;
 yet such high Rants , with-
 out true proof , are but like
 School-boyes paper-Kites ,
 which soar high and loftie ,
 but have nothing else worth
 taking notice of. They will
 have the confidence to tell
 you, that their Popish Church
 is the *Roman* Catholick , and
 onely true Christian Church
 in the whole world : But the
 Protestants Answer to this
 their boasting , is , that all
 the Christian Churches in the
 whole world (besides , the
 Popish Churches) though
 more in number than they ,
 declare quite contrary. They
 will ask you , where your
 Pro-

Protestant Church was before *Luther*, which was wittily answered by one; (where the Papist Church never was) in the Bible.

The Papists do divert themselves very much at our stiling our King, *Head of the Church*, as we do, for their doing so, for we esteem our King, Head onely in his own Dominions, without the Popes title of infallible; and sure 'tis more rational that those of a Kingdom should allow their King to be *Head of the Church* in his own Kingdoms, than that a few Cardinals should make the *Head of the Church* over all Kingdoms. And for all their Jeasting, I

am sure we can shew (in so-
ber earnest) Scripture-presi-
dents for Kings being Heads
of Churches in their own Do-
minions , which is more than
the papists can shew for their
Pope , or his Churches infal-
libilitie : for sure they can-
not object against it as new
Doctrine (though Doctrine
that's new is their greatest
Trade) that the Kings of Ju-
dah , and the first Christian
Emperors were Heads of the
Jewish Churches and in their
own Dominions : And Solo-
mon tells us , *That a Divine
Sentence is in the lips of the
King , and his mouth trans-
gresseth not in Judgement*
(which I am sure Popes have
not ,

not, witness *Liberius*) and *Solomon* gives the reason, because the Heart of the King is in the Hand of the Lord. If the Papists will pretend so much Scripture for their Pope, I shall onely answer, 'Tis more than ever Protestants read, or the Apostles writ.

The Papists will tell you with a great deal of confidence, that though we say the Bible is the Religion of Protestants, yet there is no Protestant Religion, or Church, mentioned in the whole Creed, which are the Articles of the Christian Faith: and they will tell you, that their Church is the Catholic.

tholick Church, and to believe the Catholick Church was an Article of the Christian Faith from the very infancie of the Church in the beginning of the Apostles time, Now let the Papists tell us, if they bring this as an Argument against the Protestant Religion in the Bible, or not; if not, what cause have they to name it, or what need have we to answer it; but if it be one, we make this reply, That the *Roman Church* is no more named in the Apostles Creed, than the Protestant Church is; for the Apostles Creed was made before the *Roman Church* was a Church, and this I am sure they

they cannot deny ; so that since the Catholick Church was then in being , and the *Roman* Church not in being , it must necessarily follow , that the *Roman* Church cannot be the Catholick Church mentioned in the Apostles Creed , and consequently is not the Mother-Church , as the Papists would have her to be : thus the Papists have so overcharg'd this Argument to shoot at us , as it recoils and flies in their own faces.

And of kin to this, is their grand Battering piece of all , which so thunders in the ears of all Papists , and makes the Popes power so absolute, and the poor credulous Papist so cbe-

obedient, and that is the power given by our Saviour to St. Peter, in the 16th of St. *Matthew*, beginning the 18th verse, *Thou art Peter, and on this Rock I will build my Church, and give thee the Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven; and whomsoever thou shalt bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven; and whomsoever thou shalt loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven;* and these words the Papists understand literally, that St. Peter's person is the Rock that Christ builds his Church on, which cannot possibly be, by the verses just following; for there when our Saviour tells his Disciples of his going

going to Jerusalem, where he must suffer many things, and be killed, and raised again the Third day; Peter took him, and began to rebuke him; be it far from thee, Lord, this shall not be unto thee: But our Saviour turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence to me, for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men. By which words 'tis most clear and evident, that our Saviour did not mean Peters person could be the Rock of the Christian Church; for if Peter's person had been that Rock meant, sure our Saviour would never have removed it behind him;

E

and

and it would be not onely irrational, but impious, to believe that Christ would build his Church on Satan, for so he calls *St. Peter's* person; and 'twere as unreasonable to believe that the Rock of Christs Church could be an offence to him as *St. Peter's* person was, and as improbable again as all this, that Christs Church, the Foundation of all Christianity, should favour, not of the things that be of God, but those that are of men, as *Peter's* person did.

Therefore if you will but please to read the words of our Saviour carefully, you shall find they are most plain, for *verse 13th.* *When Jesus*
came

came into the Coast of Cæſarea, He ask'd his Disciples, Whom do men ſay that I am, and they ſaid, Some ſay that thou art John the Baptiſt, ſome Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the Prophets, but whom ſay ye that I am; and Simon Peter answered and ſaid, Thou art Chriſt the Son of the Living God: And I ſay alſo unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this Rock, (not this perſon) I will build my Church, that is (upon this Rock of Faith) that I am Chriſt the Son of the Living God, I build my Church, and the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it. Now this muſt neceſſarily relate to his faith,

not his person ; for the gates of Hell , that's the power of evil , did prevail against Peter's person , or he had not deny'd and forsworn his Lord and Master again and again ; and been afterwards proved blame-worthy by St. Paul to his face , and indeed as blame-worthy as any of his Disciples ; so that 'tis most plain , that Christs words (of making him the Rock of the Christian Church) related not to his person , but his faith of Christs being the Son of the Living God.

And for the other part ; whereas the Papists believe a particular favour and power , given by our Saviour to S *Pe*

ter; of the **Keys of Heaven**; that was given as much to the Eleven Disciples, as to him, as you may read in the 18th of St. *Matthew*, & in the 20th of St. *John's Gospel*, and the 23, 24. verses; *As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you, and when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose-soever sins ye retain, they are retained.* So that you see this power is general, to the Disciples, and not in particular to St. *Peter*, more than to any of the rest, as the **Papists** mis-believe.

The Papists have many such Questions, which I am sure, *Madam*, you have neither the patience to read, nor I the time to write, but those that are most material of them you will find, I have here presented you, truly answer'd, by pure Scripture, clear reasons, plain arguments, and all in few words, fit for the weakest memory, or smallest pocket, to carry about them; for true reason doth not consist in large Volumes, long Gowns, or gray Beards; for many live to One and Twenty, without attaining to years of discretion; the degrees of Age being not still the measures of wisdom, for the world

world will never be without old Fools , and young Philosophers.

And truly , *Madam* , for my part , I cannot so much as think of the Papists Religion without wonder , that so many rational men of them should rather fasten their faith of salvation on the pretended infallibility of their Church (which is deny'd by most Christians) than on the Holy Scriptures , which is granted by all , to be the Will and Word of God ; and the very Foundation of their Churches Foundation , as containing in it all things necessary to our salvation. And we Protestants have at least this

satisfaction and advantage, that not onely the Papists, but all sorts of Christians that are in the circumference of the whole world, meet and joyn with us in this centre of Faith, that the Scriptures contain all things necessary to our salvation; which being a general granted Truth, I confesse, I admire, how any Papist can make the least scruple, which is the safest Heavenly Guide, the Pope or the Gospel: If there be any rational man so extravagant as to put them in the same ballance, and to commit a rape upon his reason, I shall onely desire him to consider this plain Question; If
 he

he were to go a Journey in
 an unknown way, would he
 not think it more rational
 and safe to follow a certain
 true Guide, that all the
 Christians in the world de-
 clare, is certainly able and
 ready to shew him the right
 way, than to follow a pre-
 tended Guide, which the
 greatest part of the Christians
 in the world assures him will
 lead him out of it; And this
 being the real difference be-
 tween the Papist and Prote-
 stant in Gross, concerning
 the Heavenly Guide, the Bi-
 ble, and the Pope, I think
 I need now say no more, be-
 cause so many have already
 said so much, and I am sure
 enough

enough, to satisfy any, except such, who will believe a crooked Rule is better, to draw a straight line by, than a right one.

And now *Madam* I shall onely beg, so much of your patience as to let me tell you, that the plot and Heads of this following discourse, I have Extracted out of the worthy *Chilingworth*. Before I begin the discourse it self; I know in writing a play, to have Rank'd the plot in the Front of it, and to make the whole design of the Prologue to be the Key, to uncipher the plot of the play, (though anciently in use) had been now, not onely out of fashion,

on, but beside reason; For the design of plays, aiming chiefly to please the senses, they ought to be compounded and mixt with hopes and fears, certainties, and uncertainties, Expectations, and delays of the event of the plots; which being all so interwoven together, creates the agreeableness of the play; for when once the whole plot is discovered, the pleasure of the play is ended; like Hare-Hunting, the sport lies not in presently taking the Hare, but in following him, in all his Rings and Doubles, and those that love plays, and such Huntings, resemble jealous men, who eagerly pursue what

what they apprehend to overtake, or as old age, which we all pray to attain, but fear to approach.

But now I come to soar my discourse to a much higher pitch, & a more Elevated Subject, and to treat of the most noble part of man, the Soul, and of true Religion the only way to Heavenly felicity, for without Holiness, no man shall see the Lord; We must therefore now *Madam*, change the Scene of sense for a spiritual one, and climb where earthly nature, can never follow us, to the pure and high Region of Heaven, which will inform us that the earlier discovering our plot of attaining

raining Heaven, will but bet-
 ter the play, and the more
 speed, the better success : for
 the joyes of Heaven are ever-
 lasting, and admits of no in-
 crease or diminution : not
 like the divertisements of
 Stage-playes, or Hunting, or
 any earthly delights, which
 cannot last, but for a season,
 and decay in our very enjoy-
 ing them, and must soon leave
 us, or we them ; but Heaven-
 ly thoughts the more and
 longer we practice them, the
 better we shall like them ;
 Heavenly joyes so far exceed-
 ing all we can here leave, as
 they are all we can ever aspire
 to have ; this we all know,
 but few of us practice, and
 F we

we all love God, but few love to keep his Commandments.

I shall therefore now *Mas*
dam tell you, as the Prologue
to my ensuing discourse, that
the grand Plot, and whole
design of it, moves chiefly on
these two hinges, first in con-
firming you, that the founda-
tion of the Protestant Re-
ligion is built on God's holy
Word, the Scriptures ; which
we Protestants, esteem to be
a perfect Rule of Faith, and
guide to our actions, and the
true Touch-stone to try all
matters by, that relate to the
good of our Souls, as certain-
ly containing in it, all things
necessary to our salvation.
The second thing I chiefly de-
sign

sign to prove, is, that neither the Pope, or the Popish Church are infallible; and these two shall make up the principal stories, in the little Model of this small building. The pretended infallibility of the Church of *Rome*, is the grand perswasive Argument, and lure to invite men to it, and the strongest commanding Garrison in a'l the Popes power; and all other Arguments, and Perswasions, are but like the small open Villages about this Garrison, which must be servants to them, that are masters of it; and if a Papist can be but once convinc'd, that neither the Pope, nor the Popish

F 2

Church

Church are infallible, they will soon be brought to reason, and our remaining differences, will not be very considerable: I shall therefore only lightly discourse on them, and shall no further trouble you *Madam*, then briefly, to answer them in my own defence, as I meet them, or as they follow me, and shall one'y do as the *Wolf* do's when pursued, snap, and bite in his own defence, against all opposers, without altering his pace, or changing his Road: I shall neither meddle with the Papists, but as I meet them in the way, or towards making of my way, to my two designed points, which are (as I said
be

before,) to prove the Scripture to be a perfect Rule of Faith, and guide to our actions: and to answer, as I go, the Papists main Arguments and objections against it.

Next, that 'tis against all Scripture, and reason, that either the Pope, or the Popish Church should be infallible; which is the main design of this discourse, and if I can by God's assistance make but the Papists believe reason, (when against their own Church,) I doubt not but by this little Pigmie discourse (as very dwarfish as 'tis,) not onely to hinder many tottering Protestants from turning Papists, but to bring some stubborn

Papists to turn Protestants, or at least not to have such an infallible good opinion of their Church, and so damnable a bad one of ours.

And now *Madam*, 'tis requisite that this my discourse should be ended, as soon as your Patience; & therefore all that I shall add either to the excusing my self, or justifying *Mr. Chillingworth*, is, that thus far of this discourse being my own writing, I confess, deserves onely my Apology, and scarce your perusal; but the following discourse being extracted out of *Mr. Chillingworth*, deserves your reading, but needs not any Apology.

And

And because I find the word Protestant is so badly, and over-largely interpreted; I shall first acquaint you, that we are not to understand by the word Protestant, the Doctrine of *Luther*, or *Calvin*, or *Geneva*, or onely the Articles of the Church of *England*, but that wherein they all agree with perfect Harmony; that the Bible is a perfect Rule of our Faith, and guide to our Actions; and this (after having made the most diligent, and impartial search of the true way to Eternal happiness.) I fully believe, and that we can never find any convincing satisfaction,

faction, but on this Rock of Gods word, the Bible, which I conceive to be the onely true Religion of Protestants.

If the Pope were indeed (what he unjustly sayes he is, & the Papists unreasonably believe him to be,) an infallible guide, then there needed no Bible, but if the Bible be, then there needs no Pope; for if I were to go a journey, and had a guide that could not err, what need I be taught the way, and having such a guide, what need I apply my self to another : So that in a word let us inform our selves the best we can, and consider as much as we please, the more consideration we take,

take, the more confirmation we shall find, that there is no other foundation for a considering Christian to build an assured dependency on, than the Scriptures, for I am fully assur'd that God do's not; (and therefore man ought not to) require of any man more than this, to believe the Scripture to be the word of God, to use our best indeavours to find the true sense of it, and to live, to our utmost according to it.

This I am sure in reason we ought to believe a wiser choice; Then if I should guide my self by the Roman Churches authority, and infallibility; when really they have

have nothing of certainty,
 but their uncertainty ; wit-
 ness Pope against Pope, Coun-
 cils against Councils, some of
 their Fathers against others,
 and rather then fail some a-
 gainst themselves, new Tra-
 ditions inrolled, and old ones
 Cashiered, in a word one
 Church against another, and
 (if that be not enough) the
 Church of one age, against
 the Church of another ;
 Whereas the Scripture being
 true and unalterable, and con-
 taining all things necessary to
 our Salvation I am secure, that
 by believing nothing else, I
 shall believe no falshood in
 matter of Faith, & if I mistake
 the true sense of Scripture,
 and

and so fall into error ; yet I am secured from any dangerous error, because whilst I am truly indeavouring to find the true ground of Scripture, I cannot but hold my error without obstinacy , and be ready to forsake it, when a more probable and true sense shall appear unto me : and then being assur'd, that all necessary truths are plainly set down in Scripture ; I am certain by believing the Scripture, to believe all necessary truth, and he that do's so, if his life be answerable to his Faith, how is it possible he should fail of Salvation.

And though the Roman Church pretend to be a perfect

fect guide of Faith, and teacher of all Divine Truths; yet sure that Title might much better, and more justly be given to the Scriptures, as their Teacher and Master.

The Roman Church brags how ancient their Church is, but doubtless they cannot deny, but the Scripture is more ancient, if they will but allow the Mother to be older than the Child.

The Papists say their Church is a means of keeping Christians at unity, so are also the Scriptures, to those that believe them in unity of belief, in matters necessary.

The Papists say their Church is Catholick, certainly

ly the Scripture is more Ca-
tholick; for all true Christi-
ans in the universal world do
now, and ever did believe
the Scriptures to be the Word
of God, so much at least, as
to contain all things necessa-
ry to salvation; whereas the
Papists say, They onely are
the true Church, and all
other Christians (though
more than they) give them
the lye for saying so.

By following the Scriptures,
I follow that whereby the Pa-
pists prove their Churches In-
fallibility; for were it not
for Scripture, what pretence
could the Papists have for it,
or what true Notion could
they receive of it; so that by
G so

so doing, the Papists must
 plainly confess, That they
 themselves are surer of the
 Truth of Scripture, than of
 their Churches Authority;
 for we must be surer of the
 proof, than of the thing pro-
 ved, or else 'tis no proof:
 so that following Scripture, I
 follow that which must be
 true, if the Papists Church
 be true; for their Church al-
 lows it's truth; whereas if I
 follow the *Roman* Church, I
 must follow that, which
 though the Scripture be true,
 may be false, nay more, must
 be false, if the Scripture be
 true, because the Scripture is
 against it. Following the Pa-
 pists Church, I must be a
 ser-

servant to my Saviour, and a
 subject to my King, onely at
 the pleasure of the Pope, and
 renounce my Allegiance,
 when the Popes will is to de-
 clare him an Heretick; nay,
 I must believe vertue vice,
 and vice vertue, if he plea-
 ses; for he both makes and
 unmakes Scripture as he
 thinks convenient; witness
 the *Apocrypha*, which hath
 not past for Canonical, but
 of late years, in the Papists
 Church, who interpret Scri-
 pture according to their Do-
 ctine, but will not judge
 their Doctrine according to
 Scripture, for none like to
 weigh light Money in true
 scales. In short, the Pope

adds, and lessens, and interprets Divine Laws as he pleases, and they must stand for Laws, and be obeyed as such; so that in effect he rules his people by his own Laws, and his own Laws by his own Lawyers, his Clergy, who dare not speak nor uphold them, other than just such as the Pope would have them; and indeed Cardinal *Richelieu* gave the reason why more hold the Pope above the Councils, than the Councils above the Pope, because the Pope gave Archbishopricks and Bishopricks, but the Councils had none to give: and though the Papists say, his Holiness cannot err, yet let

let not the Papists forget what God sayes in the Scripture, if (not onely the Pope) but if an Angel from Heaven shall preach any thing against the Gospel of Christ, let him be accursed.

In following the Scripture we have God's expresse command, and no colour of any prohibition, but to believe; the Popish Church infallible, we have no Scripture-command at all, much less an expresse one.

Following the Popish Church, we must believe many things, not onely above reason, but against reason, witness Transubstantiation, whereas following the

Scripture, we shall believe many misteries, but no impossibilities; many things above our reason, but nothing against it; Nay, we need not believe any thing, which reason will not convince us we ought to believe; for reason will convince any sober Christian, that the Scripture is the Word of God, and there's no reason can be greater than this, that God says it, therefore it must be true.

In a word, we Protestants believe, that all things necessary to our salvation, are evidently contain'd in Scripture; and what is not there evidently contained, cannot be necessary.

cessary to be believed, and our reason is just and clear, because nothing can challenge our Belief, as to salvation, but what hath descended to us from our Blessed Saviour Christ Jesus, by original and universal Tradition; now nothing but Scripture hath thus descended to us, therefore nothing but Scripture can challenge our Belief.

Now the grand difference between the Papists and us, concerning the Scripture, is this; We hold the Scripture to be the onely perfect Rule whereby to judge of Controversies. The Papists say, That they acknowledge the Scriptures to be a perfect
G 4 Rule,

Rule, onely they deny that it excludes unwritten Tradition, which in effect is this; they say, 'Tis as perfect a Rule, as a Writing can be, onely they deny it to be as perfect a Rule as a Writing may be; either they must revoke their acknowledgment, or retract their contradiction of it, for both cannot possibly stand together: for if they will but stand to what they have granted, that Scripture is as perfect a Rule of Faith, as a Writing can be, they must then grant it so compleat, as it needs no addition; and so evident, that it needs no interpretation, for both these properties are requisite

quisite to a perfect Rule: and that a writing is capable of both these properties, and perfections, is most plain, for he that denies it, must say that something may be spoken which cannot be written, for if such a compleat evident rule of Faith, may be delivered by word of mouth, as the Papists pretend may, and is, and whatsoever is delivered by word of mouth, may also be written; then such a compleat and evident rule of Faith, may also be written, for the Argument is most plain, whatsoever may be spoken may be written; a perfect rule of Faith has been spoken, therefore a perfect rule.

rule of Faith may be written; If the Papists cannot see this plain conclusion, they had best desire more light to be added to the Sun:

The Papist pretend their Church to be, the infallible Teacher of all Divine Truths, and an infallible interpreter of all obscurities in the Faith, but the Papists will, I hope, give us leave to admire, how they can pretend to Teach them in all places, without writing them down, that is certainly, beyond the reach of their power to do, as well as our belief that 'tis to be done.

And for the Papists saying there must be a living authority

rity, beside the Scripture, or
 else controversies cannot be
 ended ; Protestants answers
 necessary controversies , are
 and may be decided, and if
 they be not, 'tis not the defect
 of the rule in Scripture, but
 the default of men; so that if
 necessary controversies be
 ended, 'tis no matter if the
 unnecessary be not; for doubt-
 less if God had required it,
 he would also have provided
 some means to effect it; but
 sure it does not stand with a-
 ny reason it should be the
 Pope, because he cannot be a
 Judge, being a partie; indeed
 in civil controversies, a Judge
 without being a partie may
 end them, but in controver-
 sies

sies of Religion, a Judge of necessity must be a concerned partie, and I am sure the Pope to us is the chief, and most concerned partie, being really concerned as much as his Popedom is worth.

Now we Protestants make the Papists this plain answer, that the means of agreeing differences, must necessarily be, either by the appointment of God, or men; men sure it cannot be, for then rational wise Protestants, may doe, as well as Papists, for let the Papists shew us if they can where God hath appointed that the Pope alone, or any confirm'd by the Pope, or that Society of Christians, which

which adhere to him, shall be the infallible Judge of controversies ; we desire the Papists, if they can to let us see any of those assertions, plainly set down in Scripture, as in all reason a thing of this nature ought to be, or at least delivered with a full consent of Fathers, nay let them so much as shew us where 'tis in plain tearms, taught by any one Father, in Four hundred years after our blessed Saviour Christ ; and if the Papists cannot do this, as we believe they cannot ; where I pray is their either Scripture or Reason, that the Pope or his Councils should obtrude themselves as Judges over us Protestants. H Next

Next we would desire to know from the Papists, whether they do certainly know or not, the sence of those Scriptures, by which they are led to the knowledge of their Church; for if they do not, how come they to know their Church is infallible; but if they do, then sure they ought to give us leave to have the same means and ability to know other plain places in Scripture, which they have to know theirs; for if all Scriptures be obscure, how come they to know the sence of those places; but if some place of it be plain, why pray may not Protestants understand them as well as Papists.

The

The Papists say , That the Scriptures are in themselves true and infallible , yet without the direction of the Church , we have no certain means to know , which Translations be faithful and Canonical , or what is the true meaning of Scriptures ; and this is the common Argument and general Belief of all Papists : To which the Protestants answer , That yet all these things must first be known , before we can know the directions of their Church to be infallible ; for the Papists cannot pretend any other proof of it , but onely some Texts of Canonical Scripture , truly interpreted ; therefore

either they must be mistaken
 in thinking there is no other
 means to know these things,
 but their Churches infallible
 direction, or else we must be
 excluded from all means of
 knowing her directions to be
 infallible; for the proof must
 be surer than the thing to be
 proved, or 'tis no proof;
 And upon better considerati-
 on, I am confident the Pa-
 pists dare not deny, but that
 'tis most certain, Faith hath
 been given by other means
 than the Church; for sure
 they will not say, that *Adam*
 received Faith by the Church,
 nor *Abraham*, nor *Job*, who
 received Faith by Revelation;
 and also the Holy Apostles,
 who

who received Faith by the miracles, and preaching of our Blessed Saviour : so that you see, and they cannot deny, but their general Doctrine is contradictory ; and to make it yet plainer, I desire to know of the Papists, if they should meet with a man, that believed neither Scripture, Church, nor God, but declares he is both ready, and willing to believe them all, if the Papist can shew him sufficient grounds to build his Faith upon, will the Papist tell such a man, there are no certain grounds how he may be converted to their Church ; or there are ; if the Papists say there are none,

H 3 they

they make Religion an uncertain thing : but if they say there are , then they must necessarily either argue woman-like , that their Church is infallible , because it is infallible , or else shew there are other certain grounds besides , saying , the Church is infallible , to prove its infallibility.

The Papists demand of the Protestants , if they believe the Apostles wrote all the Scriptures , for if they did not , how come we to call and believe them Apostolical , and not the Writings of those that writ them : To which we answer ; Though all the Scriptures were not written
by

by the Apostles themselves, yet they were all confirm'd by them; and though a Clerk writes a Statute, and the King, Lords and Commons confirm it in Parliament; I believe they would esteem it very improper to call it the Statute of such a Clerk, though writ by him, but an Act of Parliament, because it was confirm'd by all their consents, and so becomes their Act, not the Clerks.

The Papist desires us to tell them in what Language the Scriptures remained uncorrupted, and we desire them, to satisfy us whether it be necessary to know it, or not necessary, if it be not, I hope

we may do well without it, but if it be necessary we desire first, that they will please to tell us what became of their Church for One thousand five hundred years together, all which time they must confess, they had no certainty of Scripture; till the time that Pope *Clement* the Eighth, set forth their approved Edition of the vulgar Translation, and none sure can have the confidence to deny, but that there was great variety of Copies currant in divers parts of their Church, and read so, which Copies might be false in some things, but more than one sort of them could not possibly be true

true in all things. And Pope
Sixtus Quintus his Bible dif-
 fer'd from Pope *Clement* his
 Bible, in a multitude of places,
 which makes us desire to be
 satisfied of the Papists, whe-
 ther before Pope *Sixtus*
Quintus his time, their
 Church had any defined Ca-
 non of Scriptures or not, for
 if they had not, then 'tis
 most evident that their
 Church was a most excellent
 keeper of Scripture, for fif-
 teen hundred years together,
 that had not all that time de-
 fin'd, what was Scripture, and
 what was not, but if the Pa-
 pist say they had, then we
 demand, was that set forth by
 Pope *Sixtus Quintus*, or was
 it

it set forth by Pope *Clement*, or if by a third different from them both, why do they not name him; if it were that set forth by Pope *Sixtus*, then 'tis now condemn'd by Pope *Clement*, if that of *Clement*, 'twas condemned by that of *Sixtus*, so that error must necessarily be betwixt them, let them chuse which side they please.

And for the book of *Maccabees*, I hope they will allow it defin'd Canonical, before *St. Gregorie's* time, though he would not allow it Canonical, but onely for the Edification of the Church.

We further desire to be satisfied of the Papists, if the
book

book of *Ecclesiasticus*, and
Wisdom, and the Epistle to
 St. James, were by the holy
 Apostles approved Canonical,
 or not, if they were appro-
 ved by the Apostles Canoni-
 cal, sure the Papists cannot
 deny, but they had a sufficient
 definition and authority, not
 to question them, and there-
 fore err'd in doing so. And
 if they were not approved
 Canonical by the Apostles,
 with what impudence dare
 the Roman Church now ap-
 prove them as Canonical, and
 yet pretend that all their
 Doctrine is Apostolical, and
 if they say these books were
 not questioned, they should
 do well to tell which books
 they

they mean, which were not
 alwayes known to be Cano-
 nical, but have afterward
 been received by the Roman
 Church to be such, so that
 this argument reaches those,
 as wel as these.

And further we are to con-
 sider, that there is not the
 same reasons, for the Churches
 absolute infallibility, as for
 the Apostles, and Scriptures,
 for if the Church falls into
 an error, it may be reformed
 by comparing it with the
 Rules of the Apostles Do-
 ctine in Scripture, but if the
 Apostles have err'd in delive-
 ring the Doctrine of Christia-
 nity in Scripture, then the
 Roman Church cannot be in-
 falli.

fallible, for Apostles, Prophets, and Canonical Writers, are the foundation of the Church, as *St. Paul* sayes 'tis built upon the foundation of Apostles and Prophets.

And now to conclude this part of my discourse in very few words, let the Papists answer, if they can but these five words. All Scripture is Divinely inspired. Let them shew us so much for the Roman Church, and shew us if they can, where 'tis written in Scripture, that all the decrees of the Popish Church are Divinely inspired, and all our Controversies will be at an end, but I believe they can
I never

never do that, without another *Transubstantiation* miracle of words.

The Papists desire us to shew them an exact Catalogue of our fundamentals, to which we answer, That God may be sufficiently known to one, and not sufficiently declared to another, and consequently that may be fundamental, and necessary to one, which is not to another; which variety of circumstances renders it impossible to set down an exact Catalogue of fundamentals, for God requires more of them to whom he gives more, and less of those to whom he gives less, more of a Commander of a Kingdom,

dom, than a poor simple Turn-spit. 'Tis a plain revelation of God to us Protestants, that the Sacrament of the Eucharist should be administered in both kinds, *1 Cor. 11 c. 28 v.* And that the publick Hymns and Prayers of the Church, should be in such a Language as is most for Edification, *1 Cor. 14,* and *15,* 16. yet the Church of *Rome*, not seeing this, by reason of the vail, would be very angry, if we told them 'twould prejudice their supposed infallibility.

We read in *St. Matthew*, that the Gospel was to be preacht to all Nations, and this was a truth revealed be-

fore our Saviours Ascension, yet if the Church had been asked, before the conversion of *Cornelius*, they would have certainly told you, it had not been necessary to teach all Nations; for 'tis most apparent out of the 11th of the *Acts*, they all believed so, until St. Peter was better informed by a vision from Heaven, and the conversion of *Cornelius*; and then they turn'd quite of a differing belief, and esteemed it necessary to teach all Nations, and yet were still a Church: The Papists are pleased to say, the Protestants differ in Fundamentals, which indeed appears to us very irrational; for

for if they say, We Protestants differ in Fundamentals, how then can they say, We are members of the same Church, one with another, more than they are with ours, or ours with theirs; and why do they object our difference more with one another, than with themselves; and if we do not differ in Fundamentals, why do they upbraid us, with Fundamental differences amongst our selves. We believe the Catholick Church cannot perish, yet we believe she may and did err, as I prov'd just before: but thus much we Protestants declare in general, that we esteem it sufficient for any

mans salvation to believe Gods Word, the Scripture, and that it contains all things necessary to our salvation, and that we do our utmost endeavours to find, believe, and follow the true sense of it; and being we are sure, that all that is any way necessary is there, believing all that is there, we are sure we believe all that is necessary.

And therefore 'tis but reasonable to say, that any private person, who truly believes the Scriptures, and heartily endeavours to know the Will of God, and to do it, is as secure, nay securer from the danger of erring in Fundamentals, than the Ro-

man Church : for 'tis impos-
 sible any man so qualified,
 should fall into an error,
 that can prove damnable to
 him; for God requires no
 more of any man to his salva-
 tion, but onely his true and
 best endeavours to be saved :
 And for the Papists Sacrament
 of Confession, which they
 hold is so absolute and neces-
 sary, and so much upbraid
 us for the want of it, we
 answer, We know no such
 absolute necessity of it; but
 yet we hold, we must not
 onely confess our sins, but
 forsake them, or we shall not
 find mercy: And we Prote-
 stants farther believe, that
 they that confess their sins,
 shall

shall find mercy, though they
 onely confess them to God,
 and not to man : And more,
 that they who confess them
 both to God and man, and
 do not in time forsake them,
 shall not find mercy.

And so for the Papists Sa-
 crament of Repentance for
 Remission of sins, though we
 Protestants know no such;
 yet we al'ow, and observe
 the same Duty, but publick
 before the Church, which
 was the constant practice of
 the primitive Church; and
Rhemanus himself, though so
 great a Champion for the Pa-
 pists, writes, That the con-
 fession then used, was be-
 fore the Church; and that
 au.

Auricular confession was not
 hen in the World.

The Papists will tell you
 that our Bishops have not the
 true power of Ordination,
 but that has been so clearly
 answered, and so truly pro-
 ved at large by so many al-
 ready, as I shall not need here
 so much as to name it: onely
 let me in a word, remember
 the Papists, that they cannot
 well deny, but that the Do-
 natists themselves whom the
 Papists esteemed as bad as us,
 as being Hereticks, and Schis-
 maticks; yet *St. Austin*, and
Optatus Bishop of *Rome*, did
 both acknowledge that they
 had the same Baptism, Creed,
 and Sacrament, and that these
 Do-

Donatist Fathers, though Schismatics, and Hereticks, gave true Ordination, or else some of these were not then esteemed Sacraments; therefore let them take which they please, there must be error of one side.

The Papists pretend they have an unanswerable objection against Protestants, which is, That we have discords in matters of Faith, without, any means of agreement: to which we answer, that the Scripture does not let us want solid means of agreement in matters necessary to salvation, and for our agreement in all controversies of Religion, either they must say we have
means

means to agree about them, or we have not ; if they say we have ; why did they before deny it, if they say we have no means, why are they so unjust to find fault with us for not agreeing ; when they themselves, say we have no means to agree.

But for a Plaister to this soar, they are so extraordinary civil, as to tell us, we may come to their Church : and they agree in matters of faith, but the plain truth of it is, that they define all matters of faith, to be those wherein they agree ; so that to say the Roman Church does agree in matters of Faith, is but to say, they agree in those things,
they

they do agree in, and sure they cannot deny, but we Protestants do the same.

But we must desire the Papists to give us leave to tell them, that they most grossly mistake, if they say, they agree in matters of Faith, as for proof; some of them hold it against Faith, to take the Oath of Allegiance, others 'tis against Faith to refuse that Oath.

Some hold it of Faith, that the Pope is head of the Church by Divine Law: others the contrary, some hold it of Faith that the blessed Virgin was free from actual sin, others the contrary; some that the Popes power over Prin-

Princes in Temporalities is
de fide, others the contrary :
 some that 'tis universal Tradition
 that the Virgin *Mary*
 was conceived in actual sin ,
 others the contrary ; And
 how the *Jesuites* and *Franci-*
scans, and other Orders differ
 to this day ; I am sure needs
 no *memorandum* ; and the best
 Jeast of all is , the Papists
 have not so much as yet agreed
 in their very pretended
 means of agreement , and
 yet have the confidence to
 pretend an Unity more than
 the Protestants ; for some of
 them say , the Pope with a
 Council may determine all
 Controversies , others deny
 it : Some hold , That a ge-
 K He

neral Council , without a Pope , may do so, others deny this: Others say , Both in conjunction are infallible Determiners , others deny this: And some among the Papists hold , The acceptation of the Decrees of Councils by the Universal Church, is the onely way to decide Controversies, which others deny by denying their Church to be infallible; and yet every part, pretends to be part of the Church.

In a word , can the Papists deny , but that there has been Popes, against Popes, Councils against Councils; Nay , Councils confirmed by Popes , against Popes confirmed

(III)

firmed by Councils. And Last-
ly , The Church of some
Ages , against the Church of
other Ages ; and since every
part of the Body is so out of
order , methinks they should
not brag of so perfect a health
as they do.

The Papists say (and do
but say it) that their Do-
ctrine is held Catholick ; and
therefore they esteem it an in-
solent madness of us Prote-
stants , to dispute against the
practice of the whole Church ;
First , That their Doctrine is
Catholick , we answer ; That
the greatest number of Chri-
stians in the world deny it ;
so that they cannot truly say,
we dispute against the pra-
K 2 ctice

ſtice of the whole Church;
 And farther we ſay, ſuppo-
 ſing we ſhould in complement
 to them grant, that their
 Church is Catholick and Uni-
 verſal; yet we ſay, That is
 no ſufficient proof, it came
 originally from the Apoſtles,
 witneſs the Doctrine of the
Milenaries, and the neceſſity
 of the Eucharift for Infants,
 which was generally taught
 by the Univerſal Church, and
 believed as Apoſtolical Tradi-
 tion, but yet contradicted
 by the Univerſal Church af-
 terwards: This, I am ſure,
 the Papifts dare not deny; ſo
 that we unavoidably caſt the
 Papifts upon this Rock, that
 they muſt either conclude
 the

the Apostles were Fountains
 of contradictorie Doctrines ;
 or that the Universal
 Doctrine of the present
 Church is no sufficient proof ,
 that it came originally from
 the Apostles ; because the
 Church Universal of one time,
 and the Church Universal of
 another time did differ.

Next for their saying , 'tis
 insolent madness to dispute
 against the practice of the
 whole Church , First we are
 sure , we can bring more
 Christian witnesses , that de-
 ny they are the whole Church,
 than they can bring to prove
 it : but supposing we were
 as mad as they say we are ,
 and would have us to be , to

dispute against the whole practice of the Church, yet I hope we may desire to know of the Papists if they can deny, but that 'twas the practice, of the whole Church in St. *Au'stine's* time, and esteemed then an Apostolical Tradition even by St. *Au'stine* himself, that the Eucharist should be administred to Infants; And then let them tell us, Whether it be insolent madness to dispute against the practice of the whole Church, or is it not; if it be not, why do they accuse us for it; but if it be insolent madness, how mad and insolent is the Papist Church, not onely to dispute against this practice of the Uni-

Universal Church, of administering the Eucharist to Infants, but utterly abolishing the practice of it.

So that the very worst the Papists can say of us, allowing what they say to be true, is that we but do, what they themselves own already to have done.

And though the Papists are pleased to say that the Holy Scriptures, and ancient Fathers, assign separation from the visible Church, as a mark of Heresie, yet they cannot shew one plain Text of Scripture to confirm it.

And for the Papists bragging of the Antiquity and universality of their Churches

Doctrine, (though we allow
 it very ancient, (bating the
 primative times) we answer
 first as to its Antiquity, we
 desire to see what Antiquity
 they can shew for their giving
 the Communion but in one
 kind, when they know that
 the Administring it in both
 kinds, was the practice of the
 Church for a Thousand years
 after Christ ; what Antiqui-
 tie for the lawfulness and ex-
 pediency of the Latine ser-
 vice, for the present use of
 indulgences ; For the Popes
 power in Temporalities over
 Princes ; for the Picturing
 the Trinity ; For the lawfulness
 of worshipping Pictures
 and Images ; For their Beads ;
 For

For their whole worship of the blessed Virgin ; For their Oblations, in the notion of Sacrifices to her, and other Saints ; For their saying *Pater Nosters* and *Creeds* to the Honour of them, and *Ave Marias* to the Virgin *Mary* ; For the infallibility of the Bishop, or Church of *Rome* ; For their Doctrine of the blessed Virgins immunity from actual sin ; For the necessity of Auricular Confession ; For the necessity of the Priests intention to obtain benefit by any of their Sacraments. And lastly for their licentious Doctrine in holding, that though a man lives and dies without the practise of any Christian

ver.

vertue, and with the Habits
 of many damnable sins un-
 mortified ; yet if at the last
 moment of his life , he has
 any sorrow for his sins, and
 joyn confession to it, he shall
 certainly be saved : This is a
 Doctrine may keep many
 souls out of Heaven, but I
 doubt will scarce carry any
 one there. So that the Pa-
 pists Doctrine being ancient,
 is nothing, as long as 'tis evi-
 dent that they hold many
 dangerous errors, as for in-
 stance, the *Milenaries*, and
 the *Communicating Infants*
 was more ancient, than their
 Doctrine, and 'tis plain that
 antiquity, unless it be absolute
 and primative, is not a cer-
 tain

tain sign of true Doctrine :
And the very Apostles them-
selves, assure us that in their
dayes, the mystery of Ini-
quity was working.

The Papists demand how
comes it to pass that their
Doctrine is so universal, (for-
getting that weeds spread
faster than good herbs.) And
we ask them how the errors
of the *Milenaries*, and the
Communicating Infants be-
came so universal, let them
tell us this, and we will tell
them that, for what is done
in some, may be done in o-
thers.

The Papists ask us where
our Church was before *Lu-
ther*, and tell us, because
t'w a

t'was no Church before him,
 therefore it can be no true
 Church at all. To which we
 answer, that this cause is no
 cause; For though *Luther*
 had no being before *Luther*,
 yet none can deny, but that
 he was, when he was, though
 he could not be before he
 was; So there may be a true
 Church after *Luther*, though
 there was none for some ages
 before him: as since *Columbus*
 his time there have been
 Christians in *America*, though
 there were none for many
 Ages before: for it does not
 follow, that nothing but a
 Church can possibly get a
 Church, nor that the present
 being of a true Church de-
 pends

pends necessarily upon the
 perpetuity of a Church in all
 Ages; for though I cannot
 deny the Churches perpetui-
 ty, yet that's not here necessa-
 ry to our difference; but
 that a false Church (by
 Gods providence over ruling
 it) may preserve a means of
 confuting their own Heresies,
 and so reduce men to truth,
 and raise a true Church, (I
 mean the integrity of the
 word of God with men.)
 Thus the Jewes preserve
 means to make men Christi-
 ans, and Papists preserve
 means to make men Prote-
 stants, and the Protestants
 false Church, (as the Romans
 call it,) preserves men Pa-
 pists,

pists : nor does it appear that the perpetuity of the Church, is the truth of the Papists Church, for they speak, as if they were the onely Christians in the World before *Luther*, when the whole World knowes, that this is but talk, and that there were other Christians besides the Papists that might have perpetuated the Church, though there had not been then one Papist in being : for sure there was a Catholick Church before the Roman one. Next the Papist say, to hold that the visible Church is not perpetual, is a Heresie, so that *Luthers* Reformation being but particular, and not universal, nor but
of

of late date, it can have nothing to do with the visible and perpetual Church ; which the Protestants answer thus : To say the visible Church is not perpetual, is properly a Heresie, but the Papists cannot deny, but that the Apostles who preach'd the Gospel in the beginning, did believe the Church universal, though their preaching at the beginning was not so : So *Luther* also might well believe the universal Church, though his Reformation was but particular, the Church in the Apostles time being universal *de jure* of right, but not *de facto* in fact.

La

Nor

Nor did *Luther* and his followers (as the Papist are pleased to mis-cal many Protestants) forsake the whole Church, but the corruptions of it, in renouncing some of their corrupt practices, and this the Protestants say they did without Schism, because they had cause to do it, and no man can have cause to be a Schismatick, because he is onely one who leaves the Church without a cause; for 'tis not onely seperation, but a causeless seperation from the Church, that is Schismatical: and I think t'will not be amiss, before I go any farther, to distinguish the difference between *Heresie*, and Schism.

Heresie

Heresie is an obstinate defence of any error against any necessary Article of the Christian Faith. Schism is a causeless separation of one part of the Church from another. Now we Protestants say still, that we never forsook the whole Church, or the external Communion of it, but onely that part of it which is corrupted, and is to be fear'd will still continue so; viz. *The Papist Church*; and forsook not, but onely reformed an other part, which part they themselves were: and sure the Papists will not say, the Protestants forsook themselves, nor their own Communion: and therefore the Papists ar-

gument must be very weak in urging, that the Protestants joyned themselves to no other part of the Church, therefore they must separate from the whole Church; which the Protestants say is a false conclusion, in as much as they themselves were part of it, and still continue so; and therefore the Protestants could no more separate from the whole, then from themselves.

So that by the Rule of Reason, if Protestants be Schismatics, because they differ from one part of the visible Church, by the same reason the Protestants may say that the Roman Church is

is in a manner made up of Schismatics, for the *Jesuits* are Schismatics from the *Dominicans*, and the *Dominicans* from the *Jesuits*, and the *Jesuits* from the *Cannonists*: the *Franciscans* from the *Dominicans*, and the *Dominicans* from the *Franciscans*; for all these (as the World knowes) differ in point of Doctrine, and betwixt them there is an irreconcilable contradiction; and therefore one part must be in error. And if the Papists will but stand to justifie what they declare as truth, *that every error against a revealed truth is a Heresie*, they holding for certain as a revealed truth, the

immaculate conception of the *Virgin Mary*, then consequently the *Dominicans* that hold and declare it an error in Doctrine, must necessarily hold a Heresie; Now it may be a fault to be in error, because it many times proceeds from a fault; but sure Protestants forsaking error, it cannot be a sin, unless to be in error, be a vertue: so hardly do Papists deal with us Protestants, as they will either damn us in making us follow their false opinions, or else brand us as Schismatics for leaving them.

And yet the rational sort of *Papists* can hardly deny, but the *Protestant Religion* must

must be a safer Religion than theirs, in worshipping Pictures, in Invoking Saints, and Angels; in denying the Lay-men the Communion in both kinds, as was commanded by our blessed Saviour; in celebrating their Church Service in an unknown Tongue, which was condemned by St. Paul. in adoring the Sacrament; and in all these a rational Papist cannot deny, but he is on the more dangerous side, as to the committing of sin, and the Protestant in the more secure way as to the avoiding it. For in all these things, if Protestants say true, the Papists do that which is impious; but on the other side, if the Papists were

were in the right, yet the *Protestants* might be secure enough too; for their fault would be onely this, that they should onely, not do some things which the *Papists* themselves confess is not altogether necessary to be done.

And truly the *Protestants* are so charitably civil, as only to say of *Papists*, as St. *Aufine* did of the *Donatists*, *That Catholicks approved the Doctrine of the Donatists, but abhorred their Heresie of Re-baptization.* So *Protestants* approve the Fundamental and necessary Truths which the *Papists* retain, by which many good souls among them may be saved, but abhor the
many

many superstitions they use in their Religion. And supposing these errours of the *Popish Church* were in themselves not damnable, to them that believe as they profess; yet for us *Protestants* to profess what we do not believe, and esteem those as Divine Truths, which we believe not to be either Divine or true; would be doubtless damnable as to us: for 'tis certain, Two men may do the same thing, and it may be sinful to one, and not to the other: as suppose a married woman gives her self out to be a widow, and one knowing her Husband to be alive, marries her, doubtless his in-
joy

joyment of her was adulterous; but a second man comes, and after seeing her pretended Husband buried, marries her, and dies without the least information, of her First Husbands being then alive, his ignorance sure protected him from sin, and the second Husbands knowledge of the sin he acted, condemned him of Adultery; and though his fault might be palliated with some excuses, yet it can never be defended by any just Apology: And so though we read in Scripture, that it was *St. Paul's* Judgment, that meat offered to Idols might lawfully be eaten; yet he says, if any should
eat

eat it with a doubtful conscience, he should sin, and be condemned for so doing.

And supposing we Protestants ought not to have forsok the Papists Church, for sin, and errours, if she had not enjoyn'd and imposed them on us; yet since she does maintain them with such obstinacy, and imposes them with such Tyranny, we ought certainly to say with St. Peter, and St. John, *'Tis better to forsake men than Gods* and leave the Popish Church communion, rather than commit or profess known errours as Divine Truths; for as the Prophet Ezekiel tells us, that to say *The Lord hath said so,*
M when

when the Lord hath not said so, is a high presumption, and great sin, be the matter never so small; and therefore when St. Paul spoke concerning Virgins abstaining from marriage, he said, He had no commandment of the Lord, but I declare my own judgement of it. Now if St. Paul had given this as God's command, surely we might have justly contradicted him, and made a distinction between divine Revelation, and humane Judgement.

So that for a Protestant to abide in the Communion of the Roman Church, is so far from securing him from error, as that if I, or any
Pro-

Protestant should continue in it, I am confident I could not be saved by it, and the reason is, because the *Papists* will not admit of my communion, without professing the entire Popish Doctrine to be true; and profess this I cannot, but I must perpetually exulcerate my conscience: and though the errors of the *Roman Church* were not in themselves damnable, yet for me to resist known Truths, and to continue in the profession of known Errors and Falshoods, is certainly a capital sin, and of great affinity with the sin which shall never be forgiven.

In short, if the errors of

M 3 the

the *Roman Church* did not warrant our departure, yet the tyrannous imposition of them would be our sufficient justification; for they force us either to forsake the *Papists Communion*, or profess as *Gospel truths*, what our conscience assures us is very little akin to them: so that the Protestants were oblig'd to forsake those errors of the *Popish Church*, and not the *Church*, but the errors, and we *Protestants* did, and do still continue members of the *Church*, having onely left what appear'd most plain to us, to be *superstitious* and *impious*. And we separate no more from the *Popish Church*,
 then

than she has separated from the *Ancient Church* ; and indeed ; to speak properly, our difference is more against the *Court*, than *Church of Rome*, which has introduced so many new ceremonies and practices in the *Popish Church*, as was never heard, nor practised in the primitive Times; as for one instance of a Thousand, I might give you ; *Their denying the cup to the Laity*, which was never practised in the Church a Thousand years after our *Saviour*.

But because the *Papists* brag so much of, and depend so entirely on, the *infallibility* of their *Church*, I shall

pass by their Out-works, and search a little into this their Grand Fort, the *infallibility* of their Church; for except they prove that, they prove nothing; but in proving that they prove all; and if the *Papists* could satisfy me either by *Scripture*, or *Reason*, that their *Church* is *infallible*, I should not onely be of their *Church* to morrow, but repent I was not sooner; but really by all that I ever heard or read, for their making it good; I find cause onely to admire their confidence, but not at all to esteem their reasons.

The chief Method they take, and degrees they use,

to prove the *infallibility* of their *Church*, are by whole sale these. First, that *St. Peter* was Head and chief amongst the *Apostles*, and that there was given to him and his successors by our *Saviour*, Universal Authority over his *Militant Church*; That the Pope or Bishop of *Rome* is *St. Peter's* Successor, and has his Authority of Universal Bishop, and consequently the *Roman Church* being built upon this *Rock*, is *infallible*, all which I doubt not, but to prove, to be inconsistent with, and contradictory both to *Scripture* and *Reason*.

As to the first point of *St. Peter's* being Head of the *Apo-*

M 4 *stles*,

files, which the *Papists* all
 stile him, and say he was
 called from thence *Cephas*,
 which is derived from the
Greek word Head, it is
 a molt gross mistake; for *Ce-
 phas* is a *Syriack* word that si-
 gnifies *Stone*; but this is one-
 ly by the by: Now we *Prote-
 stants* say, though we allow
 St. Peter might have primacy
 of Order; yet we cannot
 grant he had supremacy of
 power over the other *Apo-
 stles*; for sure it cannot stand
 with the least reason, that St.
 Peter should have authority
 over all the *Apostles*, and yet
 never act the least authority
 over any one of them.

Nor is it reasonable to
 be-

believe, that St. Peter having authority over all the *Apo-*
stles for about 25 years toge-
 ther, should never shew the
 least power over any of them
 all that time, nor so much as
 receive the least subjection
 from them; sure any one must
 think this as strange, and un-
 reasonable, as if a King of
England for 25 years together
 should not do one Act of Re-
 gality among his subjects, nor
 receive any one acknowledg-
 ment from them.

Nor sure is it less strange
 and unreasonable, that the
Papists should so many Ages
 after, know this so certainly,
 as they pretend they do, and
 yet that the *Apostles* them-
 selves.

selves, after that these words
 were spoke in their hearing
 by vertue whereof St. Peter
 is pretended to be made their
 head, should still be so igno-
 rant of it, as to question our
Saviour, which of them should
be the greatest, by which sure
 we may rationally conclude,
 they did not then know; for
 if they did, their question had
 been needless, and superflu-
 ous, in desiring to be taught,
 what they already knew.

And what yet appears
 more strange then all, is that
 our Saviour should not have
 helped them out of their er-
 ror by telling them St. Peter
 was the man, but rather con-
 firmed them in the contrary
 by

by saying *the Kings of the Gentiles exercise Authority over them, but it should not be so among them.*

And again it is as strange and unreasonable, that *St. Paul* should so farr forget both *St. Peter*, and himself, as in mentioning so often *St. Peter*, he should still do it without ascribing him any title of honour: Nor does it stand with reason, that *St. Paul* speaking of the several degrees of men in the *Church*, should omit giving *St. Peter* the highest, if it had been his due; but place him in the same rank and Equipage with the rest of the *Apostles*, for *St. Paul* sayes *God hath appointed*

pointed (not first St. Peter then the rest of the Apostles) but *first Apostles, secondly Prophets*, now certainly if *Apostles* were all first, that is all equal, how could one be in greater power than the other.

But besides all this, though we should grant against all these probabilities, and many more, that *Optatus* Bishop of *Rome*, meant that St. Peter was head of the *Aposiles*, yet sure the *Papists* are still very farr from proving, the Bishop of *Rome* was to be so at all, much less by divine right, successor to St. Peter in his headship and Authority. For what incongruity is there, if we

we say, that *Optatus* might
 succeed *St. Peter* as his heir
 and successor, in that part of
 his Government of that par-
 ticular *Church of Rome* (as
 sure he did even whilst *St.*
Peter was living) and yet that
 neither he, nor any man was
 to succeed him in his Apost'e-
 ship, nor in the Government
 of the *Church universal*: as
 though a Bishop should leave
 his Son heir to all he dyed
 possessed of, I hope you will
 not conclude, therefore he
 must necessarily succeed him
 in the Bishoprick he dyed
 seized of. The *Apostles* were
 men all called, and divinely in-
 spired by the *Holy Ghost*,
 which was the immediate
 N gift

gift of *God*, and therefore
 could not be left as a Legacy
 by-man; for though it be in
 any mans power to leave his
 Estate, yet 'tis in no mans
 power to leave to his Son,
 his acquir'd parts at his death.
 'Tis further worth your ob-
 serving, and special notice,
 that *St. Peter* himself and the
 rest of the *Apostles*, by lay-
 ing the foundation of the
Church, were to be themselves
 the foundation of it, and are
 accordingly so called in *Scripture*.
 And therefore as in a
 building 'tis incongruous that
 foundations, should succeed
 foundations, so it may be in
 the *Church*, that *Apostles*
 should succeed *Apostles*, the
 Church

Church being built upon
Apostles and Prophets.

Nor indeed does the grand
argument of the *Papists*, for
their *Pope*, extend any further
in Reallity then to the parti-
cular *See* of *Rome*; for thus
goes their main argument.
St. Peter was first Bishop of
Rome, and the *Apostles*,
did not then attribute to
themselves, each one his par-
ticular *Chair* (understand in
that City of *Rome*, for in o-
ther places, others had *Chairs*
besides *St. Peter*) and there-
fore sayes the *Papist*, he is a
Schismatick who against that
one single *Chair* erects ano-
ther: (understand still in the
same place) and this is the
N^a ground

ground & the Authority the *Papists* say, the *Pope* has to be Successor to St. Peter, and to exercise Authority over the Universal Church.

But sure the *Protestants* urge more rationally in arguing thus, That St. Peter wrote *Two Catholick Epistles*, in which he mentions his own departure, and writes to preserve the *Christians* in the faith: but yet in neither of these *Two Epistles* does he commend the *Christians* to the guidance and authority of his pretended Successor the Bishop of *Rome*; which sure if St. Peter had intended, he would never have forgot to have named it.

And

And since the *Papists* so reverence and adore the *Popes* power, let us *Protestants* also admire his way and means of attaining this power ;. for though the *Papists* say, that as soon as he is made *Pope*, he has his authority immediately from *Christ*; yet at the very same time the *Papists* all know, that he cannot be made *Pope*, but by Authority and Election of the *Cardinals*; so that I am sure by the very same reason, any man that is chosen a Magistrate in any Town under the *Pope's* Territories, may claim his Authority as immediately received from *Christ*, as well as the *Pope*. And further, that the

proving his being made *Pope*,
 does not render him infallible,
 I could give a hundred instan-
 ces out of the History of
Popes, but that will not suit
 well with my designed brevi-
 ty; but let's ask the *Papist*,
 if *Liberius* Bishop of *Rome*,
 after Two years Banishment,
 did not by the solicitation of
Fortunatianus Bishop of *Acqui-*
leia, subscribe to Heretic,
 and consequently could not
 be infallible. And though
 the *Papists* rely so much on
 the Authority of the Fathers,
 to support and justify the in-
 fallibility of their *Church*, yet
 upon true Examination we
 shall find, they make no more
 for their Universal Bishop,
 than

than *St. Peter's Two Catholick Epistles* do.

And for their arguing out of *St. Cyprian's 55 Epistles*; that sure makes rather against, than for them; for there *St. Cyprian* writes to *Cornelius* Bishop of *Rome*, but writes not so much to him, as of himself, who was Bishop of *Carthage*; against whom a Faction of Schismaticks had set up another Bishop: Now though the Papists say reasonably, that 'tis a mark of the Universal Bishop, that other Bishops should make their Addresses unto the Bishop of *Rome*, yet sure 'twere better Reasoning to conclude thus, If the Bishop of *Rome* had

been acknowledged Universal Bishop, and his Authority and Supremacy had been believ'd and own'd, sure St. *Cyprian* had not been satisfied with onely barely writing him his sad story, (for he did no more,) but doubtless would have made his complaint to him, and desired and expected redress from him, as Universal Bishop over the whole *Catholick Church*, but his not doing so, argued he esteem'd him Bishop onely of one *Church*.

And further, St. *Cyprian* all know, did resolutely oppose a Decree of the *Roman Bishop*, and all that adhered to him in that one point of
Re-

Rebaptizing, which the *Papish Church* at that time delivered as a necessary Tradition, and Excommunicated the Bishop of *Cappadocia, Galatia*, and all that were against that Tradition, and would not so much as allow them lodging or entertainment in *Rome*.

Now since the *Papists* affirm, that not to re-baptize those, whom Hereticks had baptized, to be a damnable Heresie. 'Tis well worth asking the *Papist*, when this begun to be so; for if they say, from the beginning it was so, then they must maintain a contradiction; for then was *St. Cyprian* a Professor of
dam.

damnable Heresie, and yet the *Papists* esteem him a Saint and Martyr.

And on the other side, if 'twere not so from the beginning, then did the Pope wrongfully excommunicate those other *Churches* of *Capadocia* and *Galatia*, without sufficient ground of Excommunication, and separation, which by their own Tenents, is schismatical; so let them chuse which side they please, the Pope was in an errour.

And though *Victor* Bishop of *Rome* obtruded the *Roman* Tradition touching the time of *Easter*, upon the *Asiatic* Bishops, under the pain of Excommunication, and
Dam.

Damnation ; yet we read that *Irenæus*, and all the other Western Bishops , though they did agree with the Bishop of *Rome* in his observation of *Easter* , yet they did sharply reprehend his excommunicating the *Asian* Bishops, for their disagreeing with him; which most plainly argues , that the Western Bishops thought that not a sufficient ground of Excommunication , which the Bishop of *Rome* did ; and therefore it must necessarily follow, they did not esteem the *Roman* Bishop infallible , nor the separation from the *Church* of *Rome* an Heresie. And this I am sure is true and undeniable reason.

The

(156)

The *Popish* Story tells us ,
That *Optatus* Bishop of *Rome*
upbraided the *Donatists* as
Schismatics , because they
held no Communion with the
Church of *Rome* , by adding
afterwards that they were
Schismatics , for they held
no Communion with the se-
ven Churches of *Asia* , which
occasions this Question of the
Papist , Whether a separation
from these seven *Apostolick*
Churches , was a mark of He-
resie , or not ; if they say it
was not , how comes it that
the Pope's Authority is a
stronger Argument for the
Popish Church , than the *Asia-*
an Authority for the *Asian*
Churches ; And if the *Papists*
say ,

(157)

say, a separation from those seven *Asian Churches* was a mark of Heresie, then they must confess their Church was for many years Heretical as separating many years from the *Asian Churches*.

And *Polycrates* Bishop of *Ephesus* and Metropolitan of *Asia* despised the *Popes* universal Supremacy and Authority, and kept contrary to the *Pope Easter-day*, the Fourteenth of *March*.

And indeed though the *Papists* do so much quote the authority of the Fathers, yet I find they as little befriend their Churches infallibility, as the *Asian Bishops* themselves have done, for though
O the

the Papist say St. *Hierome* conceived it necessary to conform in matters of Faith, to the Church of *Rome*; yet before the *Papist* brag of that, let them answer us this, how came it then to pass, that St. *Hierome* chose to believe the *Epistle* to the *Hebrews* Canonical upon the authority of the *Eastern* Church, and to reject it from the Canon of the *Roman* Churches Authority. And how comes it also that he dissented from the *Roman* Church touching the Canon of the old Testament, let the *Papist* take heed of losing their Fort, by endeavouring to maintain their out-works.

And

And now to conclude this point, and excuse the Papists mistake concerning their universal Bishop, we read in Scripture of the Prophet *Elias*, who thought there was none left beside himself in the whole Kingdom of *Israel*, who had not revolted from God; and yet God himself is pleased to assure us he was deceived; And if a Prophet, and one of the greatest err'd in his judgment, touching his own time and Country, why may not the *Papists* (subject to the same passions) err in their opinion, and judgment about the *Popes* being universal Bishop, when plain reason tells them, as well as us, that

there were other Bishops as much universal as the *Pope*.

I now come to examine this infallible *Pope*, whether he cannot make his infallible *Church* more infallible than he has made himself, and free the *Popish Church* from error, though he could not the *Pope* from Heresie.

Now towards the disproving the pretended infallibility of the *Roman Church*, I lay this as the foundation of my discourse, that the whole *Roman Church* can be no better then a Congregation of men, whereof every particular, not one excepted, and consequently the generality, is nothing but a collection of
men,

men, and if every one be polluted, (*as who dare say he is free from sin*) how can the whole but be defiled with error; as reasonably may a man brag he is in perfect health and strength, and yet at the same time confess he hath not one sound part about him. And truly it very much creates my wonder, but does not in the least satisfy my reason, what the *Papists* can pretend by the infallibility of their *Church*, for if they will allow their *Pope* to be no better than *St. Peter* was; their *Church* to be composed of no better men than the *Holy Apostles* were; I shall desire no more,
and

and I am sure they can never prove so much, for they that pretend to it, declare as great an *ignorance*, as St. Peter did a *sin*, in denying his Lord and Master: and there are many other known circumstances, which made St. Paul prove him blame-worthy to his face.

And for the *Apostles* being in error, we have not onely the examples of the *Apostles* themselves, who in the time of our *Saviours* Passion, being scandalized, lost their faith in him, and I believe the Papists will not say they could lose their faith in our blessed *Saviour Christ* without error; and therefore our Saviour after

ter his Resurrection upbraided them with their incredulity, and called *Thomas* incredulous for denying the Resurrection in the Twentieth of *St. John*.

And further 'tis most apparent that the very *Apostles* themselves, even after the sending the *Holy Ghost*, did through inadvertency, or prejudice, continue sometime in an error, contrary to a revealed truth; And if the *Papists* will not own to know this truth, they may be fully satisfied of it in the story of the *Acts* of the *Apostles*, where they may plainly read that notwithstanding our *Saviours* exprefs warrant and injuncti-

on to the *Apostles* to go and preach to all Nations. Yet notwithstanding, till St. Peter was better informed by a vision from Heaven, and by the conversion of *Cornelius*, (both St. Peter and the rest of the Church, held it unlawful for them to go and Preach the Gospel to any but the *Jewes*. Now since we can prove that St. Peter did err, and that the Church composed partly of the *Holy Apostles* themselves, who were blessed with, and inspired by the *Holy Ghost*, could mistake, and that there is no man free from sin, and yet that the Body of men that make up the *Popish Church* should be infallible, is I confess

ness beside my Faith, to believe, or reason to comprehend.

For sure if the *Roman Church* had been esteem'd by the *Apostles* infallible, what needed the *Apostles* any other Creed, than this short Creed, *I believe the Roman Church* infallible, and that would have been more effectual to keep the believers of it, from Heresie, and in the true Faith, then this Apostolical Creed we now have.

And sure the *Papists* cannot but believe with us, that those holy men that wrote the New Testament, were not onely good men, but also men that were desirous to direct

direct us in the plainest and surest way to Heaven. And the *Papists* cannot also but believe with us, that they were likewise men very sufficiently instructed by the Spirit of God, in all the necessary points of the Christian Faith : Therefore certainly 'tis most rational to believe, they could not be ignorant of this *unum necessarium*, that all Faith is no Faith, except we believe the Church of *Rome*, was design'd by God to be the Guide of Faith, as the Church of *Roome* believes, and would have us believe so too.

We also further believe, and that with great reason
too,

too, that the Writers of the New Testament were wise men, especially being they were assisted by the Spirit of wisdom; and such that must know, that an uncertain Guide was as bad as none at all; and yet after all this, is it possible for a Philosophical or contemplative man; nay, for any man that has reason or common sense, after all these suppositions, to believe that none among these holy Writers of the New Testament should remember, (*ad rei memoriam.*) To set down plainly this most necessary Doctrine, not so much as once, that we were to believe the *Roman* Church infallible.

Again,

Again, that none of the *Evangelists* should so much as once name this Popish necessary point of Faith, if they had esteem'd it necessary for us to believe it, when St. Paul says, *He kept not back any thing that was profitable for us* and sure the Papists cannot deny, but what is necessary to salvation, must be very profitable: And St. Luke also plainly tells Christians, his intent was *to write all things necessary*. And sure it stands also with reason, that when St. Paul wrote to the *Romans*, he would have congratulated this their extraordinary privilege, if he had believ'd it belong'd to them.

And

And though the *Romans* bring it as a great Argument for them that St. Paul tells them, *Their Faith is spoken all the world over.* Yet pray let them moderate those thoughts with this consideration, that St. Paul said the very same thing to the *Thessalonians*; and let them further consider this, that if the *Roman* Faith had been the Rule of Faith for all the world for ever, as the Papists hold, sure St. Paul would have forborne to put the *Romans* in fear of an impossibility (for though rail- lery is much in Fashion now, sure 'twas not then) that they also, nay the whole Church of the Gentiles, if
P they

they did not look to their standing, might fall into infidelity, as the *Jews* had done, 1 *Eph.* 11.

And methinks it also stands with great reason, that the *Apostles* writing so often of Hereticks, and Antichrist, should have given the Christian world this (as Papists pretend) onely sure Preservative from them, to be guided by the infallible Church of *Rome*, and not to separate from it, upon the pain of damnation.

Methinks also *St. Peter*, *St. James*, and *St. Jude*, in their Catholick *Epistles*, would not have forgot giving Christians this Catholick direction

on of following the *Roman* Church ; and *St. John* instead of saying , *He that believes that Jesus is the Christ , and born of God* , might have said , *He that adheres to the Doctrine of the Roman Church* , and lives according to it , is a good Christian ; and by this mark you shall know him. In a word , can there be any thing more irrational , than to believe , that none of these holy men , who were so desirous of mens salvation , should so much as once remember to write , that we were to obey the *Roman* Church , but leave it to be collected from uncertain principles , and by more un-

certain consequences.

So that upon the whole, I cannot without much wonder, look on the *Pope's* confidence, and the *Papists* credulity, in esteeming the *Pope* or his Councils to be an infallible Guide; sure either they never read what they ought to believe, or else they will not believe what they read, though it be never so known a Truth, and worthy of belief: for if they did, they could never believe the infallibility of the Popish Church. for indeed if they would read the Popish story; or, as I may well call it, the Civil Wars of the Popes, you shall find, as I said before, Pope
against

against Pope, Councils against Councils; some Fathers against others, nay, some against themselves; new Traditions brought in, and old ones turn'd out; one Church against another; nay, the Church of one Age against the Church of another. In a word, the Papists say, their Church is infallible, and all other Christians besides themselves, though more in number than they, absolutely deny it; and yet we must for all that believe the Popish Church infallible.

And to speak the plain Truth, and in a word to unravel the real cause of the Grandeur of the Church of

Rome, above all other Churches, is onely this; *Rome* was the Imperial Town of the Empire, and its Greatness was given by men, and not God; and when afterwards *Constantinople* was the Imperial City, they Decreed, that the Church of *Constantinople* should have equal Priviledges and Dignities with that of *Rome*.

And now to end this Discourse, I desire you will please to consider this Conclusion, which is, that after all that the Papists have said, be it never so much and mighty to shew the infallibility of their Church, I am verily perswaded they can-

cannot shew more, if so much, out of the Scriptures, for their Church, as the smallest society of Christians met together in prayer, can for themselves, *that when two or three are met together in my name, I will be amongst them* sayes the Lord. And now I have just done this small discourse, and the Sun is just upon finishing this dayes visit. I can very readily follow that holy advice of not *letting it go down in my anger* : (which I thank God I have to none living) and therefore am in so much Charity with the *Papists*, as to wish that neither they, nor *Protestants*, might wast their pretious
time

time in meer speculative controversies about words: and ceremonies, which of themselves will never carry us to Heaven; but that we may spend our time like wise Christians in the wayes, and fear of God, which is the onely beginning of wisdom; and not consume it in studying and maintaining of Disputes, and factions, but if we must still differ, let *Protestants*, and *Papists* differ in opinions, but as *Aristotle*, and *Cicero* did, who, though they were of differing Judgments touching the natures of *Souls*, yet both of them agreed in the main, that all men had *Souls*, and souls of the same nature.

And

And as Phisitians though they dispute whether the Brain or the Heart be the principle part of man, yet that all men have Brains, and Heart they sufficiently agree in ; So though *Protestants* esteem one part of the Church doctrine, and *Papists* set a higher value on another part, yet the Soul of the Church may be in both of them, and though the *Papists* account that a necessary truth, which the *Protestants* account neither, necessary, nor perhaps true; yet in truth, truly necessary they both agree, *viz.* The Apostles Creed, and that Faith, Hope, and Charity, are necessary to Salvation ; And
lastly

lastly though *Papists* hold, they may be justified by their works, and *Protestants* hold none can be justified barely by them, (in regard of the imperfections of their works) yet on the other side, we so much agree with the *Papists*, as to esteem none can be justified without them, for without Repentance, and Charity, none can be good, they being both like Health to our bodies, the want of which is sufficient to disturb all other pleasures. Therefore when we read St. Pauls *Treatise of justification by Faith, without the works of the Law.* Let us at the same time read what he writes to the
the

the *Corinthians* concerning the absolute necessity of that Excellent vertue of *Charity*, and they will reconcile one another ; and I wish, *that we were all so reconciled in the unity of the Spirit, and in the bond of peace.* And that you *Madam* may be the sooner reconcil'd to me, for this tediousness ; I shall now make a conclusion , which after such an overgrown letter, must needs be the best complement that can be made by,

Madam

yours &c.

*London the 24. of
Feb. 1673.*



